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INR 07, P 04, CIA 04, DOD 01, SP 02, SS 20, NSAE 00, AID 30, IO 15,
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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 962

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON PA 995

THE FOLLOWING TEL FROM DANANG DTD NOV 17, 1967 IS RPTD YOUR STA:

QUOTE
SUBJECT: POST ELECTION SITUATION IN QUANG TRI

REFERENCE: DANANG 303

1. THE REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIETS: QUANG TRI'S LARGEST PARTY, REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIETS (RDV), APPEAR TO HAVE EMERGED FROM LOWER HOUSE ELECTION HAVING AT BEST HELD THEIR OWN. RDV'S PRINCIPAL CANDIDATE IN ELECTION, PARTY SECRETARY HOANG PHUNG, FINISHED SECOND, DR. TRUONG DINH TU, IS PARTY SYMPATHIZER AND MAY WELL JOIN PARTY, ACCORDING TO CONVERSATIONS WITH QUANG TRI RDV LEADERS SUCH AS HOANG XUAN TUU, AND MORE RECENTLY, LE VAN

(1)

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IN DANANG. HOANG PHUNG IS QUITE IRRITATED AT DR. TU OVER WHAT HE REGARDS AS BREACH OF TRUST. PHUNG CLAIMS THAT HE AND DR. TU HAD WORKED OUT INFORMAL VOTE-SWAPPING AGREEMENT WHEREBY TU WOULD

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GET RDV SUPPORT IN EXCHANGE FOR SUPPORT OF TU'S CATHOLIC FRIENDS FOR PHUNG. PHUNG SAYS THAT WHILE HE LIVED UP TO HIS END OF THE BARGAIN, TU DID NOT, RESULTING IN PHUNG'S DEFEAT. ELECTION OF ONE OF TWO CANDIDATES SEEMS IN LINE WITH RESULTS OF SENATE ELECTIONS, WHEN TWO OF FOUR RDV "RICE BUNCH TICKETS" (21 AND 24) FINISHED FOURTH AND SIXTH RESPECTIVELY. NGHIEM XUAN THIEN, HEAD OF LIST 24, VISITED QUANG TRI IN HIS CAMPAIGN.

2. PHUNG IS FEELING VERY MUCH JILTED SUITOR IN WAKE OF ELECTIONS. HE SAID THAT HE SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN ANY MORE BUDDHIST VOTES THAN HE DID, BUT THAT AN QUANG UBA PAGODA IN QUANG TRI INSTRUCTED FAITHFUL TO CAST ONLY ONE BALLOT, AND THAT FOR ASSISTANT UBA REPRESENTATIVE NGUYEN VAN TRIEN. PHUNG SAYS THAT IN ADDITION TO BEING BUDDHIST, HE WAS MEMBER OF UBA FROM 1958 UNTIL THE STRUGGLE AGAINST KHANH GOVERNMENT IN 1964.

COMMENT: PHUNG'S CHARGE THAT UBA BUDDHISTS ONLY CAST ONE BALLOT SEEMS DOUBTFUL, SINCE OTHER UBA-SUPPORTED CANDIDATE, LE DINH NGOAN, FINISHED FOURTH WITH 14,617 VOTES. NGOAN IS

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EX-STRUGGLER WHO WAS DISQUALIFIED BY LOCAL ELECTION COMMITTEE, BUT REINSTATED BY CENTRAL ELECTION COMMITTEE.

3. ONE THING SEEMS CLEAR. BUDDHISTS CAN DELIVER ENOUGH VOTES TO INSURE ELECTION OF AT LEAST ONE OF THEIR CANDIDATES. NGUYEN VAN TRIEN, BIG WINNER IN QUANG TRI WITH 30,903 VOTES, USED CAMPAIGN LITERATURE DESCRIBING HIMSELF AS "BUDDHIST WHO HAS COOPERATED WITH PROVINCIAL UBA SINCE 1933". ABILITY OF QUANG TRI UBA-BACKED CANDIDATES TO CAPTURE LARGE PERCENTAGE OF VOTE MADE STRIKINGLY CLEAR IN PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN 1965. NINE UBA-SUPPORTED CANDIDATES RUNNING UNDER LOTUS SYMBOL ALL WON WITH TOTALS RANGING FROM 51,164 TO 53,461 VOTES, WHILE NEAREST RUNNER-UP RECEIVED ONLY 16,947 BALLOTS. IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION, UBA TOOK NO PUBLIC STAND, BUT PROBABLY MOST VOTED FOR NGUYEN THANH VINH LIST, WHICH RECEIVED 46.40 PERCENT OF VOTE. IN SENATE ELECTION, UBA BACKED LISTS (4, 6, 10, 13, 17, AND 46) ALL FINISHED WITHIN THE TOP 13. LEADING QUANG TRI MONK, THICH THIEN BINH, APPEARS PLEASED WITH

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RESULTS OF LOWER HOUSE ELECTION (SEE REFTEL).

4. CATHOLICS, LIKE BUDDHISTS, ALSO APPEAR CAPABLE OF DELIVERING BLOC VOTE. WORTHY OF NOTE THAT IN UPPER HOUSE ELECTION, FIVE

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OF THE CATHOLIC-BACKED LISTS (3, 8, 11, 25, AND 31) FINISHED IN TOP TWELVE IN QUANG TRI. ONLY CATHOLIC IN RACE BESIDES DR. TU, QUANG TRI NEW DAI VIET SECRETARY NGUYEN VAN NHUAN, FINISHED SEVENTH; HOWEVER, NHUAN CLAIMS THAT ONLY DR. TU HAD BACKING FROM PROVINCE PRIESTS, WHICH SEEMS LIKELY. NHUAN'S SHOWING ALSO INDICATION OF WEAKNESS OF NEW DAI VIETS IN QUANG TRI.

5. LOWER HOUSE ELECTION DEMONSTRATED WEAKNESS OF VNQDD IN QUANG TRI. PARTY'S ONLY CANDIDATE, HO NGOC THANH, FINSIHED FIFTH, WITH 13,481 VOTES. THIS IS PROBABLY TRUER INDICATION OF PARTY STRENGTH THAN WERE CONSTITUENTASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, IN WHICH VNQDD LIST GOT 47.29 PERCENT OF VOTE, SUFFICIENT UNDER LIST SYSTEM TO PLACE NGUYEN THANH VINH IN CA. IT SEEMS PROBABLE, HOWEVER, THAT ALMSOT EVERYONE WHO DID NOT ACTIVELY SUPPORT RDV LIST LINED UP ON SIDE OF VNQDD SLATE, SINCE ONLY THOSE TWO LISTS RAN. IN ADDITION, I CORPS COMMANDER GENERAL LAM SUPPORTED LIST. DURING RECENT CONVERSATION WITH POLOFF, VNQDD MEMBER CLAIMED THAT FACTIONALIZATION THAT CHARACTERIZES VNQDD IN OTHER I CORPS PROVINCES DOES NOT EXIST IN QUANG TRI. PARTY REALIZES ITS WEAKNESS COMPARED TO RDV AND CONSEQUENTLY IS UNITED "EVEN THOUGH WE ARE NOT IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT AMONG OURSELVES".

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THIS, IF TRUE, IS REMARKABLY SENSIBLE AND UNUSUAL VIEW FOR I CORPS POLITICIAN TO TAKE.
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ORIGIN/ACTION

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A-316 NO. | CONFIDENTIAL/NOFORN | (1369) HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO : DANANG, CINCPAC, CINCPAC FOR POLAD

FROM : Amembassy SAIGON DATE: November 29, 1967

SUBJECT : The CVT and Politics

REF : SAIGON 9948, 7687, 6340, 5242, 3945, 2838, 789, A-66, July 28, 1967; A-40, July 19, 1967

Action Assigned to VN

Action Taken NOTED

12/13/67

Symbol EAM

After much soul-searching and considerable debate, the April 1[illegible] Convention of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor (CVT) decided to officially and overtly enter the lists in the political campaigns for the Vietnamese Senate and Lower House. The decision marked a sharp change in previous policy on the part of the CVT which heretofore has abstained from overt participation in national politics and there was a considerable body of opinion at the Convention which opposed the move. The results have given some ammunition to both sides of the question but those who favor continued participation seem to have won the day, at least for the time being.

Presidential Election

The CVT did not officially endorse any ticket in the Presidential campaign, but CVT President Tran Quoc Buu let it be known that he personally favored the Thieu-Ky ticket. As the Thieu-Ky ticket was the successful one (which came as a surprise to nobody), Buu's semi-endorsement of the ticket might possibly be regarded as a political victory for the CVT. In any case, it did serve to strengthen Buu's personal relations with the newly elected President and Vice President.

Enclosures:

1. Report on the Results of the Elections to the House of Representatives on October 22, 1967.

2. Editorial from Cong Nhan.

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Drafted by: LAB:RCSearing:gcr

Contents and Classification Approved by: POL:JACalhoun

Clearances: LAB:RASenser; POL:TConlon/TFHDunlop; POL:TMRecknagel

Senate Elections

The CVT announced its own slate composed entirely of CVT officials for the Senate elections and at the same time instructed its financial advisor, Trinh Quang Quy, to accept a place on the Senate List of General Tran Van Don - the Farmer-Worker-Soldier list. The CVT list was eliminated prior to the election by the decision of the Central Election Committee (SAIGON 1687) and the CVT then threw its entire support behind the list headed by General Don. This list came in first with some 980,000 votes, as compared with its next nearest competitor, the list headed by Nguyen Van Huyen, which got 630,000 votes. CVT officials regarded the Farmer-Worker-Soldier success as a great victory for the CVT. General Don also publicly attributed his election partially to the support of the trade union federation.

Lower House Elections

Unlike the Senate, for which all candidates ran on a nationwide basis, the Lower House candidates campaigned for seats from particular geographical areas, generally provinces. The CVT announced that 25 of its cadre would be official CVT candidates and the organization also threw its support to some 26 other candidates who were not members of the CVT but were felt to be sympathetic to the purposes of the trade union federation. Shortly before the election, CVT President Tran Qu[illegible] Buu, estimated that some 17 of these 51 candidates stood an excellent cha[illegible]e of securing election. When the returns were counted, however, none of the CVT candidates secured election and only 4 of the supported candidates were victorious.

Post Election Reaction

The reaction of most CVT officials in the period immediately after the election was one of shock and dismay. They had clearly expected to do much better in the Lower House elections than they did and were at a loss to explain the differences between their apparent success in the Upper House and their defeat in the Assembly elections. Fortunately, although there were some who cried, "I told you so," most officials decided to make a careful examination of the reasons for the defeat and then take steps to correct the situation in the future. A study was undertaken by members of the CVT's Civic Action Committee. The Committee has now published a preliminary report on the election and they promise to continue their efforts. A translation of the preliminary report is enclosed as Enclosure 1.

COMMENT:

The results of the Lower House election raise questions concerning the CVT's impact on political development in Viet Nam. Huong Xuan Dong, the

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General Secretary of the Independent Railway Workers Federation (a not unbiased witness), claims the results clearly show CVT's complete lack of strength at the grass roots level. He says the Lower House results are a much better gauge than the success of the Nong Cong Binh ticket in the Senate race, which success he attributes to the prestige of the leader of the ticket, not to the CVT. Mr. Dong undoubtedly takes an extreme view of the situation, but there is at least an element of truth in what he says.

Fortunately, as may be seen from the enclosed CVT report, the confederation itself is most concerned at their election failure, has made a reasoned analysis of the situation which does not minimize its own shortcomings, and now proposes to take steps to remedy the faults. Of the reasons which the CVT lists for its failure, perhaps the most important is lack of proper advance preparation. The organization waited until very late in the game to decide on which of their own people would be selected to run for office and, with respect to the "supported" candidates, changed their lists up until the very last moments of the campaign. Further, even though the Convention decided in April to get into the then forthcoming campaigns, virtually nothing was done to prepare the members for the campaign in terms of propaganda and education on the need to vote. All too often, the attitude seemed to be that if the CVT announced its support of a given candidate, the announcement itself would be sufficient to assure the votes of all the CVT members.

Related to the above factor was another and perhaps equally important one which does not come out in the Committee's report. Although the Convention decided on overt political action, many members and officials of the CVT continued to feel that the union should continue in its old course abjuring open political activity, in part at least because they believe political action to be futile and apt to bring down the wrath of the government on their heads. Foremost among those who feel this way is the CVT's General Secretary, Tran Huu Quyen. This view did not receive overt expression during the campaign, but undoubtedly underlay the lack of interest shown by many CVT members. One CVT official, who was actually a candidate for election to the House, told an Embassy officer he was considering withdrawing because he "knew" the election would not be "free" and, even if he were elected, he would not have any real influence. This lack of faith in the government has not disappeared since the election. A recent editorial in the CVT weekly newspaper, The Worker, (Enclosure 2) illustrates this point and also points up a latent anti-Americanism within certain parts of the confederation. The editorial was written by the General Secretary.

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On the more optimistic side is the fact that the CVT candidates did come close to winning or made a respectable showing in many constituencies. As the CVT report points out, in Hue, Quang Nam, Binh Long and the First District of Saigon, CVT-supported candidates came in immediately behind the winners and in other places were well up among the front-runners. Also, in at least two other constituencies, CVT candidates who had stood a good chance of winning were eliminated from the race, one being disqualified and the other being assassinated.

Finally, one of the most optimistic results of the election is the realistic way the CVT has looked at its own organization in the political realm and its clear determination to bring about a change for the better. The Committee has called for the establishment of political action committees at all local levels and the beginning of an extensive program of civic and political education. In response to that call, such local committees have already been established in Quang Tin, Binh Thuan, Gia Dinh, Phong Dinh, Pleiku, Tay Ninh, Kien Hoa, Long An, Ba Xuyen, An Giang and Quang Nai. It is a long way to the next elections and some diminution of interest will undoubtedly occur, but if the proposed program of political educati on is actually carried out, the CVT may well stand somewhat higher in the listings when they do occur.

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REPORT OF THE CIVIC ACTION COMMITTEE TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE VIETNAMESE FEDERATION OF LABOR ON THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OCTOBER 22, 1967

Brother President:

We present herewith the first results of the elections to the House of Representatives on October 22, 1967.

To our knowledge, out of 50 candidates (24 cadres and 26 sympathizers) endorsed and supported by the CVT, only 4 candidates were elected.

I-Causes for the Defeat

With the first information we have received and after having contacted certain of our candidates in Saigon and the neighboring provinces, it seems possible to outline the causes for the defeat and to put them into five categories:

A. 1st Category

1. In general, before the election on October 22, 1967, the members of the CVT lacked faith in the honesty of the elections for the following reasons:

- the violent campaign undertaken against the irregularities and mistakes committed during the presidential and senatorial elections on September 3, 1967.

- the annulation of the candidacies of the First Vice President of the CVT, Brother Vo Van Dau, having presented his candidacy at Phong Dinh (in the Mekong Delta) and of Brother Vu Quang Lan, member of the Provincial Council of Unions in Bien Hoa (30 kms north of Saigon).

- the assassination of Brother Tran Van Meo, candidate from the province of Long An (in the Delta) on the night of October 11, 1967 in the suburbs of the city of Tan An. This assassination created suspicion in union ranks which was exploited by Communist propaganda using as a pretext the fact that the assassin fled in the direction of the city.

2. The Saigon Council, annoyed by the annulation of the candidacy of its President, Brother To Thanh Tuyen, as head of the CVT's Senate list, met on August 4 and 14 to consider their position with respect to the Lower House elections and finally decided to abstain. This resolution was communicated to the Confederal Bureau of the CVT by letter No. 144 on August 21.

Because of this decision, the national office of the CVT was forced in extremis to nominate 2 CVT cadre and give its support to 3 other sympathizers.

All these facts illustrate a general spirit of discontent and lassitude even abstention, throughout the ranks of the CVT which had an unfortunate influence on the electoral campaign and the voting.

3. Added to all the above is another regrettable fact, which is that we have been so imprudent as to disseminate publicly the complete list of our candidates. That must have aroused great opposition in the ranks of the candidates of other groups and the police, who feared the success that we achieved in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1966 (more than 20 candidates supported by the CVT were elected among which was Brother Dang Van Tuat, Vice President of the Dinh Tuong Provincial Union) and the even more spectacular success of the Nong Cong Binh (Farmers, Workers and Soldiers) in the Senatorial elections of September 9, 1967.

B. 2nd Category

We have had to compete naturally with the candidates of other groups. We are not speaking of the candidates of the important religious groupings who, in general, voted en bloc for their candidates, nor of the ancient political parties who, except in two or three provinces in Central Viet Nam, did not count for much in the elections. We believe we must speak however of the special case of the recently formed Nong Cong Binh, using the name which was given to the list of candidates to the Senate which had been formed with the support of the Bureau of the CVT.

After the elimination of the CVT list we publicly threw all our support to Nong Cong Binh and it was thanks in part to our support that this list obtained its spectacular results in the Senatorial elections.

Precisely because of these results other candidates of all categories including those of Nong Cong Binh opposed our candidates in particular in order to beat them at all costs.

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In truth for the Lower House electoral campaign, there was neither an agreement nor a coalition between our candidates using the name Cong Nong (Workers and Farmers) and those of Nong Cong Binh (Farmers, Workers and Soldiers). Not only that, there were, for example in Gia Dinh, disputes concerning the choice of insignia because our candidates used the symbol of the CVT which is a buffalo surrounded by a toothed wheel while the candidates of Nong Cong Binh adopted the symbol of their senatorial list which was a buffalo similar to ours surrounded by a star (of an army general). In Gia Dinh, our candidate was forced (because of the election law) to abandon the buffalo and retain only the toothed wheel because he had registered his symbol after the other.

Worse still, in Binh Long (located about 100 kms northwest of Saigon) the candidate of Nong Cong Binh attacked the CVT candidate. The Provincial Election Committee informed the Central Election Committee of this fact and the Committee issued a clarifying statement in the newspaper Chinh Luan on October 22, 1967. Where we have been attacked by the candidates of Nong Cong Binh, we limited ourselves to a defensive position feeling correctly it was to the interest of all to promote in the future the collaboration begun in the recent past.

But for the moment, what was even more deplorable was the confusion among our adherents in particular and among the population generally. Most of them believed that our candidates using the buffalo in the toothed wheel and those of Nong Cong Binh using the buffalo within a star were of the same origin. This worked out to the benefit of the latter since their symbol, strongly supported by the CVT, had already been popularized in the Senate campaign and they continued to so benefit in the Lower House campaign to the detriment of our own candidates.

C. 3rd Category

Our candidates were at a considerable disadvantage financially as compared to the greater part of the other candidates who were able to spend at the minimum between 5 and 600,000 piasters and for many the expenditures mounted to 2 to 3 million piasters in support of their campaigns. During the last days of the campaign, which constituted the sprint our candidates were virtually without funds which was a great handicap to the conclusion of their campaigns.

D. 4th Category

Some of our candidates have been the victims of internal disunion and dissension. We can cite, for example, the following cases:

- In Gia Dinh, Brother Nguyen Van Phong was not supported by Brother Lu Hon, secretary general of the provincial union, who gave his support to a competing candidate.

- In Dinh Tuong, two non-designated candidates competed with the agreed candidate.

- In Vinh Binh, the CVT provincial representative Do Van Nang, was opposed to the conaidate designated by the CVT who came from Saigon.

- In Quang Ngai the local union was divided into two groups, one for and the other opposed to the candidate chosen by the union itself.

There are undoubtedly other examples, which can only weaken our power because such disagreements have repercussions on the mass of our members and among the population generally to the detriment of our unhappy candidates.

From the beginning of the campaign, our members, as we mentioned above, were not well disposed toward the election. During the campaign, they have been additionally disturbed by the competition engaged in by some of our local leaders.

In these circumstances, our electoral propaganda could not have a great deal of effect on our members who were asked for the first time openly to vote for the candidates of the CVT.

These members of the CVT are spread throughout the country. This is perhaps an advantage in the vote for the Senate since, as in the presidential election the senatorial election was countrywide which constituted a single and unique electoral district while in the election for the Lower House each province was a separate electoral district and in practically none of these districts do our members constitute an important part of the electorate. One could however influence the results if our electorate was well guided and educated. But this is not the way things worked out and our cadres made still another mistake in being too optimistic especially following the electoral victories in the Constituent Assembly and the Senate as we have mentioned above.

E. 5th Category

The majority of our candidates throughout the campaign were forced to continue to handle the affairs of the local unions which prevented them

from giving all of their time, as is necessary, to their electoral battle. For example, in Saigon-Gia Dinh, our two candidates, Nguyen Van Thanh and Nguyen Van Phong, had to devote a large part of their time to two strikes which took place at the Institut Pasteur in Saigon and in the Michelin establishment at Hoc Mon.

Therein lies a fault in organization very prejudicial to our candidates.

We put our finger on another weakness in our armor. This comes from a lack of time to put into place ad hoc electoral machinery.

In point of fact, it was not until April 1967, during the 5th National Congress of the CVT that it was decided for the first time after 18 years of existence to authorize the CVT to:

1. take part in all levels of legislative power by presenting election candidates.

2. to form Civic Action Committees at all levels of the CVT to foster civic education for all members and to concern itself with political affairs, particularly the legislative elections.

Immediately after the Convention, the Central Committee charged Le Van Dong, CVT advisor, with responsibility for the Central Civic Action Committee. However, after his success in the Senatorial elections, Mr. Dong dropped his job with the Committee with the result that the Committee became inactive and was not reactivated until about 10 days before the Lower House elections. This explains why its efforts were so weak.

II- Proposals and Conclusions

The weaknesses which we have noticed during t[illegible]ion can be attributed in part to the late organization of th[illegible]on Committees which must normally supplement the Central Bureau[illegible]utive Committee at all levels in this new area of civi[illegible]nd political action.

Up to the present time, our cadres have been limited to professional and union activities and they were thrown into political activities which were too complicated and subtle without a careful preparation partly as result of the weakness of the Civic Action Committee when first organized.

Also because of this weakness, our members have not received the beginning of a civic education, not even for the immediate and urgent purpose of voting for the CVT.

For the future, we propose:

1. a meeting of all the candidates and union leaders to study in depth the causes of our defeat and the lessons to be learned therefrom.

2. to urge the establishment of Civic Action Committees at all levels.

3. to give life to these Committees by applying the resolution voted by the National Congress (in April 1967).

Inspired by the spirit of this resolution and by the directives of the president of the CVT, we believe it necessary to give a new push to these committees which much undertake to give to all members of the CVT, or at least in the first stage to all the CVT cadres, a civic and political education side by side with worker and union education. Such education is indispensable for Vietnamese workers who, like other classes in Society, are subjected to the propaganda of the Communists. It is useful in this connection to recall the words of our President on the occasion of a dinner given by the Vietnamese-German Friendship Association. "The battle against the Communists is a daily necessity---In the countries where the battle against the Communists is a daily reality and above all in those like Viet Nam where this battle reaches the level of paroxysm, the absence of legal mass organizations to face the organized structure of Communism is a weakness in political arms."

Therefore, in establishing the Civic Action Committee, which should be similar to the organ of political education of the AFL-CIO (see the book by Florence Peterson on American Unions), we must with great urgency arm our workers civically ourselves and not by means of a governmental organ which does not always have the confidnece of the people. If in the beginning we lack necessary financial means, we believe it feasible to devote one session to civic education during our regular trade union training programs.

Once our cadres and members are politically and civically well informed we can certainly count much on them. Already, alongside our weaknesses and lack of knowledge concerning political techniques which we have already mentioned, we have seen moving and edifying proof in most provinces of the correct execution of and fidelity to the advice given to the voters by the CVT during the last election.

With this latent force, in a continuing state of development both in the city and countryside, the Committee can, if it is well led, inculcate throughout our membership, by means of our daily struggle on the professional and social side, trade union and civic education, political beliefs capable

of checking Communist indoctrination and can also be victorious at the next elections. Because, if from top to bottom, everyone is faithful to these beliefs, we will have no need to fear the adverse forces of MONEY and POWER.

But for the moment, our candidates have been in general poorly viewed by the corrupt representatives of the administration in the towns and villages. These corrupt officials, assisted by the police, have for the most part, worked generally only for money. For them, any method was valid from threats to trickery, especially in insecure areas, in order to secure victory for their candidates.

Our candidates, being able to count on the financial aid of our Movement alone, have not had the money either to bribe or buy votes as was done by the rich and influential candidates.

However, after everything is said, we note with all loyalty that the results obtained by our candidates during the last election were not all bad. In certain provinces, our Brothers, while not elected, came very close to election. (for example, in Hue, our Brother Tran Minh Tri came in second; in Danang, Brother Nguyen Buoi was fourth among 19 candidates; in Quang Nam Brother Vu Thuy came in fourth immediately behind the 3 elected candidates; in Long Khanh, Brother Le Huong Chuong was fifth out of 15 candidates; in Binh Long, Brother Dinh Van Phu came in second; and in First District of Saigon, Miss Tran Kim Thoa came in sixth after the five elected candidates.)

For more information we await the reports of those responsible in each province to give you all the details in each electoral district.

In consequence, we have reason to hope, even in this new area of political activity, in the total education of the workers of Viet Nam.

With all sincere good wishes for the workers' cause.

Saigon, 25 October 1967

Civic Action Committee of the CVT

Doan Van Bong Nguyen Huu Khai

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EDITORIAL FROM CONG NHAN

The history of Politics is almost the same as the history of the puppet-shows.

When you pull the string you make the puppets act according to your plans and your schemes.

Apparently the question is very simple, but it is very complicated and delicate in its operation. Many people believe the puppets act by their own free will, but the puppet-master behind them is really the "guilty" person, responsible for all actions.

Since World War II, our country has been constantly a place for testing political puppet-shows, as have other countries in South East Asia.

The French re-occupied Indochina and established puppet Anti-Communist-governments. They were but puppet-shows directed by a political puppet master living discreetly in some place outside the Indochinese peninsula. After the defeat of Dien Bien Phu the French had to leave and to transfer the puppet-mastery to the Americans who have organized many shows since the Ngo dynasty.

The chaos of our country caused by the actual mournful war, originated with the political puppet-shows in which the leaders of the nation were unconscious as the may-flies and accepted the role of puppets for shows, as long as they could satisfy their personal naughty ambitions, the ambitions of traitors.

After downfall of the 1st Republican regime, we have now a second republican regime with all the artificial performances and immature actions of a parliamentary system in which we see an arbitrary administration putting pressure on the people's method of making a living.

Of course the question is beyond the limits of determination by a nation, but if the leaders of the nation recognize that they are the puppets, they can change their role by becoming puppet-masters. In this case they can save their country and their people from being only a puppet-show. And the war can be ended favorably for the Vietnamese people to live in freedom and peace.

Actually, the false election, the loose freedom, the stupid democracy, the street-demonstrations, the protest-meetings, the split in the ranks, the struggle for positions, the unfair competition, the misery of the nation... are they enough to make us realize that we are puppets? On the contrary we are really ignorant in face of all political histories.

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The restoration-miracle of Japan and West Germany after 20 years of defeat proves once more the heartbroken veracity in the political history of the world: "In politics, to pull the string of the puppets is but a common practice, but it is pitiful for the permanent puppets, the puppets for life who don't know how to liberate themselves from the puppet-show in order to become puppet-masters in this international inextricable political structure."

The difference among the Great Powers and the under-developed-countries in this existence of the world in the present nuclear era, comes from the difference between the state of prosperity of the puppet-masters, and the misery of the puppet-nations.

Can we win the war over the Communists?

Can we provide the people with Peace, Food, Clothes? All depends on the fact that we must know ourselves and the others in this puppet-show business.

Because our professional activities and union activities are within the framework of political influence, we, agricultural and industrial workers, we must realize more than anybody else that if we lack wisdom and clear-sightedness, we will be the unconditional victims of the puppet-show.

We must tighten our union ranks, and we hope that we can survive these classical puppet-shows.